

# How to Raise a Dragon --The Imaginary Journal Series

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Summary: I, Neries, find an egg in the forest one day, changing everything about my life. SafirGul, my timberjack teaches me about loving a dragon. Her and I, experience many adventures and lessons in friendship as we go through trials together, both with ourselves and with other people and dragons on the Isle of Berk (sorry the summary sucks)

## 1. Chapter 1: The Timberjack

### **\*\*Chapter 1: The Timberjack\*\***

I live on the Isle of Berk. Now, I know what you might be thinking. Dragon wars, killing, dragons stealing food, but not me. Not our family. We're not exactly Vikings. We don't live in the village. We live a little way away, in the forest, in a nice wooden lodge. We don't really get involved in the affairs of the village, and we mostly stay to ourselves. We do some of our own fishing and hunting, and have a little garden patch. The rest we go into town for, and buy and trade and sell. Everything was nice and simply, and we'd have our wood and fire and food when winter came. Life was simply, and lovely. The dragons usually didn't bother us. But then one day, it all changed.

I was out in the forest, walking, enjoying nature, drawing, and simply enjoying my free time. Then I found it. It was an egg. Not a little bird egg, but an egg as big as both of my fists put together. I knew immediately what this rough, grey egg was. It was a dragon egg. I went slowly closer, and I gently and curiously touched the egg, just barely. The egg began to glow. I backed off quickly. It looked like it was going to explode. But then it didn't. The glow died off and the egg just sat there again, plain and boring. I crept closer, wondering. I wondered if I could help the little dragon hatch. I know, I was supposed to despise dragons and all, living on Berk, but I still believed that all life was valuable. I wanted it at least to have a chance to live. An idea formed in my head of taking the egg to a near dragon out-cropping where I was sure it would be

seen.

I reached out and picked it up. The shell crumbled from my touch. Into my hands flopped a small baby dragon, it's golden wings limp and slimy. Horrified, I immediately set the dragon down. It had golden-colored scales, with black spines, claws (on the wings), and two tiny black horns. Its face and head were black, but the rest was a golden-red color, all of which looked harmless and tender at its young age, still being soft and young, its claws, horns, and spikes weren't sharp, and its scales weren't protective. It had very large wings, and no legs, just claws on its wings, like a bat. It must have been a Timberjack dragon, I thought, for I had read the Book of Dragons many times, whenever I was in the village. But it looked dead. Then I saw it was breathing. Why wasn't it moving? Opening its eyes? I poked the dragon gently, and a small, pitiful noise came from the tiny creature. I decided the best thing to do would be to would be to clean the gunk off the dragon, and do what my original plan had been: Put it on a dragon out-cropping and get out of there. I didn't need a baby dragon to care for. I shouldn't have a baby dragon to care for.

I picked up the dragon gingerly, slightly disgusted, and carefully set it down slightly outside our garden. I ran inside and grabbed a cloth, and cautiously wiped off its slimy body. I took it to a nearby cliff where I thought dragons might drop by and set it down, and just when I was about to turn and leave it there, it opened its eyes. It looked up at me. One eye was a deep blue, the other a fiery golden yellow-orange. Its large, black pupils looked up at me helplessly. It seemed to be asking, "You're just going to leave me here?" I froze in that stare. I knew all along there wasn't a good chance a dragon would come by. I knew that even if one did, it probably wouldn't want to care for offspring that was not its own. And I knew that, once night came, it would probably get too cold for a baby dragon to be able to heat itself. Its wings spread out around it, and it just kept staring at me with those two differently colored, intense eyes, set in its black face. I saw myself reflected in the two odd eyes, my brown hair waving and curling gently to my shoulders, my intense brown eyes shining back at those of the dragon, my slightly tipped nose, my freckles, and full, but not bloated, lips, pushed slightly forward in almost a question. I blinked my long dark eyelashes at those innocent, pleading eyes.

I knew then that I couldn't leave this baby to die. I also know that if the dragon were ever to be found, I would be shunned the rest of my life as a dragon friend, along with the rest of my family and we could starve due to lack of trading and help and the dragon would be caged, or killed. This was a huge risk. But I don't mean to keep it forever. Just until it's old enough to fly, and join the other dragons, I told myself.

I leaned down and tenderly scooped up the little dragon. I'd just have to hide it in my room for a few weeks, and then it should be able to fly, and I wouldn't have to worry about it anymore. I slipped quietly back through the woods with the tiny dragon. I made it home, and slipped inside. Thankfully, no one came between me and my room. I slipped into my room, and hurriedly make a nest of little rags under my bed. "There you go," I said to the little dragon, setting her down. "Now, I'm only keeping you until you can fly. Then you have a fair chance and can fend for yourself," I told the baby sternly, who looked back at me with its two different eyes, wide, and intent.

"Also," I stated, looking back at the dragon, peeking out from under my bed. "You are not getting a name, I shall call you 'Dragon,' and that's it," then I mumbled to myself, "You'll probably eat me alive when you're old enough anyways. Why am I doing this?" I asked myself, as I went into the kitchen to get the dragon food.

I grabbed some fish and meat, and slipped into the room and offer the dragon food. "Dragon" as I so deemed her, (I honestly don't know why I knew she was a girlâ€"but somehow, she just was) tenderly tried to bite into the fish, before making a tiny wail sound, and slinking her head down on her wing's thumbs (which looked like bat thumbs) and looked at me sadly. She apparently couldn't eat it. Sighing, I knew what I had to do. She probably need it all ground up, as if it was regurgitated. What I didn't realize then, was that she was not a normal baby dragon. She was a lot weaker and would take a lot more work.

I walked back into the kitchen, to see my mom. "Hello," she said, smiling at me. I smile, trying not to look like I was hiding anything. She looked at the fish and meat in my hand curiously. "I just wanted a snack," I tell her, hoping she'll buy it. It doesn't take much; she nodded and continued on her way.

As soon as she left, I quickly minced up and ground up the food, gross fish and meat juice oozing everywhere, and took it back to the baby dragon. I tried not to look at her. The less association, the better, in my opinion. I heard her eat it all happily. Then, as if exhausted by the effort of being moved around and eating, she slumped her head down. Despite myself, I looked at her curiously. Did normal dragon babies act this way?

That night, I was fast asleep, until I heard a pitiful wailing noise. I woke with a start and looked around. The noise came again. Then I remembered: There was a dragon in my room. I lit the lamp next to my bed and looked around. Stuck underneath my drawing desk was the little dragon. She didn't look stuck, but she was acting stuck. I helped her out, and "Dragon" slumped to the floor. I was seriously starting to wonder if little dragons normally did this. I quieted her down, and she calmed quickly as I held her in my hands. My heart warmed, but I silently and strictly quenched it. There was no getting attached to this dragon. Our family would become outcasts from the village, and that could mean we would starve without being able to trade with them. I would let her go as soon as she could fly. I tucked her back into her little bed, and pushed her slightly farther underneath my own bed. I thought about taking her out tomorrow to help her with wing strength. Maybe I could get rid of her sooner and save danger and time, getting rid of her.

The next morning, I woke and stretched. I looked under the bed, and my heart stopped. Panic choked me. She looked dead. I reached out and touched her. She barely opened her eyes at the touch, and her body barely moved with breath. She made the tiniest moan and "Dragon" closed her oddly matched eyes.

"Noâ€|" I whispered. "Dragon" couldn't die, not like this. I was supposed to give her a chance. My risk would be for nothing. I slipped back into the kitchen, and from our food store, I grabbed some milk we'd traded at the village. I poured some into a small bowl. I came back into my room hurriedly, and proffered the dish to "Dragon." She slowly stuck out her forked tongue and gingerly lapped

it up. Then she closed her eyes again. I was beginning to think she was not acting like a normal dragon should. I quickly minced up some more fish.

"Good morning," my dad said, as he looked up.

I froze, but then tried to act normal, "Good morning," I said, yawning like I normally would. He didn't pay much attention, thankfully. I walked as normally as I could back to my room, and gave the minced fish to "Dragon." She didn't even stir. Worried, I prodded her gently with my finger. She did not move.

## 2. Chapter 2: Revival and Denial

### Chapter 2:

#### Revival and Denial

"Dragon," I hissed, worried. She didn't move. I shook my head. She felt too cold. "No, no, no," I whined. "You can't just die." I told her sternly. I pulled her gently out from under the bed. Maybe she wasn't warm enough! That must be it, I thought. I went to the fire place, and lit a piece of wood that was sitting next to it, ready to be put in. Since it's cold on Berk pretty much all year round, we still had a fire in the summer. I slipped back into my room, and then the stick the burning wood next to her. She shivered. She was alive! I breathed a sigh of relief. She moved, stretching, the fire seeming to rejuvenate her. She let out a soft wail, and looked up at me, her two eyes full of pain and exhaustion.

"What's wrong?" I hissed at her, my eyebrows coming together in worry. I knew she couldn't be a normal dragon now. That must have been why her egg had been abandoned in the woods. Or was that a mistake? I shook my head. What was I supposed to do?

Slowly, she crawled toward me. Groaning softly, she crawled into my lap and slumped down in an exhausted but somewhat satisfactory manner. I smiled bittersweetly. I didn't know why exactly I wanted her to stay alive, but I knew at least part of it was the feeling that, if she did, my risk of discovery would be in vain. Fate could not be so cruel, I thought, as to bring this beautiful little dragon hatchling unto my path simply to snatch it away again.

"Are you cold?" I asked softly of "Dragon." She simply moved her head to gaze up at me with her two odd, beautifully intense eyes. I pulled the stick closer, careful to touch the cool end, and ever-so-gently lifted her onto it.

"Dragon" made a small, content sound, falling somewhere between a coo and a purr. Her breaths seemed to come more deeply and her body seemed to be more full of life.

Pondering outloud, I said, "Mother dragons must keep their hatchlings warm with their breath."

For some reason, the thought seemed to both warm and chillâ€”thinking about dragons acting with compassion. I had never been quite as set in the belief as the rest of Berk that dragons were completely evil beasts by nature. Wild, yes. Dangerousâ€”definitely. But I knew of

few wholly evil other wild creatures.

The miniscule dragon curled contentedly in front of me, drifting to sleep, helped encourage me to rethink how I viewed dragons. I tried to tell myself this dragon only acted this way because I had saved it, but I wasn't able to wholly convince myself. If dragons were truly so wild and unruly, this one would not show such friendliness or compassion. I shook my head. Such thoughts were dangerous.

\_And keeping a dragon in your bedroom isn't?\_ Came a sarcastic voice from my mind. \_Only temporarily,\_ I thought sternly to myself. It would prove humans far more evil and vindictive than any dragon were I to leave a defenseless baby dragon to the cruel clutches of the wilderness.

"Dragon?" I whispered, continually dismissing the half-formed thought of a name from my mind. "Would you like something to eat?"

The small creature before me opened her eyes slowly at the sound of my voice, sleepiness dragging the edges of her eyelids down. She sniffed the fish chunks cautiously. As soon as the smell hit her nose, however, her eyes shot open and she began to voraciously wolf down the proffered food, apparently ravenous.

Once she had eaten her fill, she yawned and curled down once more onto the barely flickering stick. After her meal, she seemed a little larger and more lively to my eyes.

"Sweet dreams, little one," I breathed softly in her ear, attempting to persuade myself it was merely a temporary attachment due to responsibility and the undeniable adorableness of the dragon hatchling—as easily dismissed as a feather let go in the wind.

I stood quietly and carefully so as not to wake her before tenderly tucking the hatchling under the bed with her warm stick, safe and sound. I exited the room, taking extra care to shut the door softly.

"Morning," mother said as I emerged from my room.

"Good morning," I replied with cheerful courtesy, though a small knot of queasy nervousness congealed within my stomach. I prayed my mother would fail to detect this. She didn't notice.

"I'm going to tend the garden," I stated.

"Thank-you, please do," my mom responded with gratitude and satisfaction.

Pulling on a coat and gloves, I met the morning chill, breathing in the fresh, damp air.

I head behind the house and got to work.

It was only a few hours before I was unable to stand the anxiety any longer. Having completed the majority of my chores, (feeding the animals, checking the metal wiring to help keep dragons out, tending the garden and foraging in nearby berry-bearing bushes) I threw down my tools as soon as possible and raced inside.

When I entered my room, my heart dropped far beyond my stomach, down to my very toes. A few of my wooden carvings I'd made in my spare time were chewed to bits, and one was even slightly charred. Several of my writing utensils and other decorations were knocked hither and thither upon the floor, and a vial of ink on my desk had spilled. One of my blankets was torn, and a few places on the floor had what I could only assume was dragon excrement.

I closed my eyes, half hoping when I opened them, the mess before me would vanish. I was obviously disappointed. My problem was not that that I had lost a blanket and a few carvings, nor that I had a mess to clean up. It was the overwhelming and terrifying possibility of discovery.

"No, no, no, no, no, no, no!" I muttered anxiously. The hatchling, whom I had just now noticed, climbed down from my small, wooden desk (which had a few small scorch marks itself

but no scratches thanks to her undeveloped wing-claws) and scampered awkwardly over to my feet using her clawed wings, her snake-like body and her wings for balance and support in an almost amusing and endearing way. She looked up at me sadly, apprehension brewing behind her two differently-colored eyes.

I stared back down at her. "That's it," I said to her, shock in my voice, my face reflecting my upset mind. "I can't keep you any longer." I felt sick with guilt and regret for this statement even as I spoke.

End  
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